

COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SERVICES
(Standing Committee of Berkeley County)

Chairman: Mrs. Judy C. Mims, District No. 6

Members: Mr. Milton Farley, District No. 1
Mrs. Judith K. Spooner, District No. 2
Mr. William E. Crosby, District No. 3
Mr. Charles E. Davis, District No. 4
Mr. Steve M. Vaughn, District No. 5
Mr. Caldwell Pinckney, Jr., District No. 7
Mr. Henry L. Richardson, Jr. District No. 8
Mr. James H. Rozier, Supervisor ex officio

The COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SERVICES, Standing Committee of Berkeley County Council, met on Monday, February 11, 2002, in the Assembly Room, Berkeley County Office Building, 223 North Live Oak Drive, Moncks Corner, South Carolina, at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Mrs. Judy C. Mims, Councilmember District No. 6, Chairman; Mr. Milton Farley, Councilmember District No. 1; Mrs. Judith K. Spooner, Councilmember District No. 2; Mr. William E. Crosby, Councilmember District No. 3; Mr. Charles E. Davis, Councilmember District No. 4; Mr. Steve M. Vaughn, Councilmember District No. 5; Mr. Caldwell Pinckney, Jr., Councilmember District No. 7; Mr. Henry L. Richardson, Jr., Councilmember District No. 8; Mr. James H. Rozier, Jr., Supervisor, ex-officio; Mr. D. Mark Stokes, County Attorney; and Ms. Barbara B. Austin, Clerk to County Council.

The requirements of the Freedom of Information Act have been complied with by posting the time, date, place and copy of Agenda of this Committee meeting of Berkeley County Council at the entrance to the Berkeley County Office Building, 223 N. Live Oak Drive, Moncks Corner, South Carolina, and a copy of such notice was mailed to all Councilmembers, the News media, and other interested citizens.

Chairman Mims called the meeting to order and asked the Committee's pleasure on the Approval of Minutes for Community Services Meeting held on January 14, 2002.

It was moved by Councilmember Spooner and seconded by Councilmember Pinckney to approve the minutes for January 14, 2002. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote of the Committee.

Chairman Mims stated on the agenda was Mrs. Bonnie Lester, Humanities Foundation, Inc., Executive Director, Re: Support of affordable housing.

Ms. Lester addressed the Committee and asked Ms. Austin to distribute copies of the letter explaining the reason for her appearance this evening. She stated she represents Humanities Foundation, which is a non-profit organization working in the Tri-county area. They do affordable housing and have an emergency assistance program to help families and

individuals who earn less than 60 percent of the median income. The median income for a family of four in Berkeley County is \$46,600. So, the families they help, a family of four would earn \$27,760. She stated they are looking at a site in Berkeley County to do some multi-family housing apartment for primarily working families who earn at the \$27,000 income level. The site is on Redbank Road halfway between North Rhett Extension and Highway 52, and is currently wooded property. Ms. Lester stated they are looking to propose a development of about 72 units or families that would be rental housing. As part of the financing for the housing they applied to the State of South Carolina, Housing Finance Agency, for an allocation of low income housing tax credits. That's a competitive award situation for those credits. They look throughout the State, they rank them and then allocate credit to various developments in the State. Berkeley County has not received an award in the last two years. In order to be competitive, they give points in different areas and she outlined four specific areas that are really more designated by the Municipalities, the Counties, or the Authorities. One is a waiver of Building Permit fees; one is the waiving of Sewer and Water tap fees; another is a grant of \$24,000 to a project; and the most important is a letter of support from the Local Governing entity saying they are supportive of this type development. There are four separate items and she would ask that Council consider each of those but given budget constraints she knows that some of them may be beyond their control.

Councilmember Crosby indicated to Ms. Lester that they are proposing to build this complex in his district. He stated it gives him heartburn to even think that they would want to build units in that location. Apparently, she has not studied Berkeley County. Charleston County has water and sewer in subdivisions and various locations; we don't have that in Berkeley County at the present time. There are people directly behind the place she plans to locate the units that do not have city water or sewer. He stated they are not allowed to tap into the system free. In some cases where water and sewer is provided to some families, they have to pay up to \$16,000 to \$20,000 to get the water. Councilmember Crosby stated, in addition to that, it would overload the schools. He stated he is not for that type of project and he couldn't support it because he doesn't believe it would be an asset to the community. It would bring a hardship to the County as well as his district.

Ms. Lester asked does the water go along Redbank? Councilmember Crosby stated yes, but that's Charleston water and she would have to go through CPW. Berkeley County does have sewer along that area.

Mr. Hehn stated they had a discussion with a realtor and the availability needs to be studied. It's going to take some engineering work; there is wetland that divides the property and he has not heard anything about it. He stated he is familiar with the points given when it's endorsed but the County cannot waive impact fees. There is a covenant in the bond issue that everybody gets treated the same. Mr. Hehn stated he was not sure about sewer because it was only available from Howe Hall Road. They are not really certain that it could reach all of the properties.

Councilmember Richardson asked Ms. Lester whether they had done a study of the area before choosing to put that type of housing in? Ms. Lester stated they were able to gather

statistical information from a study that the Trident United Way did relating to housing for Berkeley County. At that income level more than 34 percent of families' income is going for rent. They try to reduce that so they could do other things such as, more disposable income for childcare, utilities, rent payments because of an emergency, etc. Councilmember Richardson asked was the site chosen based on the population in that study? Ms. Lester stated it's a combination; they saw that the Hanahan-Goose Creek area seemed to be rapidly growing, and that families needed to be where there is fairly adequate access to jobs. It's close to the Military bases and they found that many of the Military families fall within the income level they looked at.

Councilmember Pinckney asked how does these units compare to what's currently in that immediate area? Ms. Lester stated in the Committee's packets are photographs of some of the apartments they built. It would look like any new apartment building would look. They would probably do two to three stories depending on the zoning requirements but it would be nice apartments, some they would be proud of having in the community.

Councilmember Richardson asked would the Humanities Foundation manage it or would they lease it out? Ms. Lester stated they oversee the management but they have professional property managers and maintenance crews that stay on site. However, they expect to own it forever; they don't expect to sell it to someone in fifteen years.

Supervisor Rozier asked what percentage of the project would they expect to be funded through tax credits? Ms. Lester stated that about 50 percent of the project amount comes through the equity that the tax credits provide. A project of this size would cost about \$5,000,000 to \$6,000,000 in total cost and they would expect to get about half of that from the tax credits. Supervisor Rozier asked did the United Way study take the whole County into consideration? Ms. Lester stated, correct; and they would try to get more focus in a particular census tract. Supervisor Rozier stated it concerns him that the United Way study included the entire County and they are admittedly taking a fast growing part of the County but also, a lower unemployment and higher income part. However, the higher unemployment and lower income is in the more rural part of the County far away from Goose Creek.

Councilmember Richardson asked would they have the population in the more rural area? Ms. Lester stated part of the difficulty of working in the more rural areas is that the number of services available to the residents such as, pharmacies, hospitals, schools, etc. are restricted. Unfortunately, when you get into the more rural areas you have to travel greater distances to get to some of those essentials. Supervisor Rozier asked did that gather points, also? Ms. Lester stated yes.

It was moved by Councilmember Crosby and seconded by Councilmember Farley to deny the endorsement to the Humanities Foundation, Inc. in support of affordable housing. The motion passed by majority vote of the Committee with Councilmembers Pinckney and Richardson voting "Nay."

Mr. Stokes stated there is one item for consideration, without objection, which is the Ordinance involving the City of Hanahan. He read the title as follows:

“AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE TRANSFER OF AUTHORITY FOR CONDUCTING MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS IN THE CITY OF HANAHAN TO THE BERKELEY COUNTY VOTER REGISTRATION AND ELECTION COMMISSION; TO DEFINE THE POWERS, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES ASSUMED BY THE BERKELEY COUNTY VOTER REGISTRATION AND ELECTION COMMISSION FOR THE CONDUCT OF MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS IN THE CITY OF HANAHAN; TO PROVIDE FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF ALL COSTS AND EXPENSES INCURRED BY THE BERKELEY COUNTY VOTER REGISTRATION AND ELECTION COMMISSION IN THE CONDUCT OF SUCH MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS; AND TO PROVIDE FOR OTHER MATTERS RELATING THERETO.”

It was moved by Councilmember Farley and seconded by Councilmember Vaughn to send the Ordinance to Council for First Reading. The motion passed unanimous voice vote of the Committee.

It was moved by Councilmember Vaughn and seconded by Councilmember Davis to adjourn. The motion passed unanimous voice vote of the Committee.

The Meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

March 25, 2002
Date Approved

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There will be a Meeting of the COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SERVICES, Standing Committee of Berkeley County Council, on Monday February 11, 2002, in the Assembly Room, Berkeley County Office Building, 223 North Live Oak Drive, Moncks Corner, S. C., following the meeting of the Committee on Justice and Public Safety at 6:00 p. m.

AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

January 14, 2002

A. Mrs. Bonnie Lester, Humanities Foundation, Inc., Executive Director, Re: Support of affordable housing.

February 6, 2002
S/Barbara B. Austin
Clerk of County Council